

# **EXHIBIT M**

**Subject:** Re: The Kindest  
**From:** Deborah Porter <deb@bostonbookfest.org>  
**To:** Jennifer De Leon <delejenn@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** Norah Piehl <norah@bostonbookfest.org>, Sonya Larson <larsonya@gmail.com>  
**Date Sent:** Monday, August 13, 2018 3:42:35 PM GMT-04:00  
**Date Received:** Monday, August 13, 2018 3:42:36 PM GMT-04:00

---

Dear Jennifer,

I am wondering what gives you the right to be angry about our decision? That story should never have been submitted to us in the first place as it carried a threat of lawsuit from the get-go and about which we knew nothing. Sonya Larson withheld this information from us. If we had known, we would not have chosen her story. In retrospect, once the plagiarism claim was made, we should have picked a different story. Instead, we fought to go ahead with publication.

We have already printed 30,000 copies of The Kindest and spent many, many hours trying to resolve the demands of Dawn Dorland so we could distribute it to the tune of approximately \$13,000. Is Sonya Larson going to reimburse us for this? Do you think we took this decision lightly? Do you think we would be destroying those copies now if we didn't feel it was our only viable option?

This is not about a white savior narrative. It's about us and our sponsor and our board not being sued if we distribute the story.

You owe us an apology. We are doing everything possible for the Boston writing community and you of all people should know that.

Best,  
Debbie

On Mon, Aug 13, 2018 at 2:48 PM, Jennifer De Leon <[delejenn@gmail.com](mailto:delejenn@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Dear Debbie and Norah,

I hope this note finds you well. I am writing to express my sincere shock (and disappointment and sadness and frankly, anger) in your decision to cancel One City One Story this year. As someone who has previously had the honor of being a 1C1S author, and as a member of the greater Boston writing community and member of the 1C1S selection committee, I am aware of the scope such an honor entails. Sonya deserves this honor. Her story deserves this honor. BBF has championed her work and I believe, should continue to do so, despite and perhaps *because of* the ridiculous claims by Dawn Dorland. We are past metaphors at this point. Dawn is trying to silence Sonya and with this recent development, it appears she is succeeding.

I can imagine the position you may find yourselves in--lawyers, corporate sponsors, lack of time and general resources to further devote to this scenario--but I urge you to reconsider your position to cancel One City One Story this year. More than ever, writers--especially writers of color--need to be encouraged and validated and lifted up, not broken down and not silenced. This issue is so much bigger than Dawn vs. Sonya. It's about the white savior narrative taking over the mic, the pen, what have you, and once again, taking over the page. Please help change the script. For all of us.

And know that I will do everything I can (despite being 2 weeks away from my due date), to support your backing of Sonya and her story. BBF stands for so, so much and part of that means standing with Sonya.

All my best,  
Jenn